

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for initiating an online meeting over a data network between a host
5 party with a first computer and an attendee party with a second computer,
where a phone connection exists over a telephone network between a first
phone of the host party and a second phone of the attendee party, the method
comprising:
sending a start meeting message over the data network to a data center;
10 receiving a meeting identification from the data center;
storing the meeting identification in a first device, which is coupled to both the
first phone and the first computer; and
transmitting the meeting identification from the first device over the telephone
network to a second device, which is coupled to both the second phone
15 and the second computer.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving the meeting identification into the second device; and
using the second device to send a join meeting message over the data network
20 to the data center.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the telephone network comprises a public
switched telephone network.
- 25 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the data network comprises an Internet.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
encoding the meeting identification by the first device prior to transmitting the
meeting identification over the telephone network to the second device.

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6. The method of claim 5, wherein the second device receives the meeting identification by monitoring the phone connection to detect the encoded meeting identification.

5 7. The method of claim 6, wherein said encoding converts the meeting identification into a dual tone multiple frequency (DTMF) signal.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
initiating an audio recording of the meeting by user input on one of said
10 devices.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
recording audio of the meeting from the phone connection through one of said
devices to the computer coupled thereto.

15 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
recording audio of the meeting from the phone connection within flash memory
of one of said devices.

20 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
enabling a privilege-to-record field for the attendee prior to allowing an audio
recording of the meeting by way of the second device.

12. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
25 a third party with a third computer joining the meeting using a third device
which is coupled to both a third phone and a third computer.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving an audio message from the data center and playing the audio
30 message to one of said parties.

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14. The method of claim 13, wherein the audio message includes instructions relating to the meeting.

15. An apparatus comprising:

5 a first interface configured to connect to a handset for receiving and transmitting analog signals to the handset;
a second interface configured to connect to a phone base for receiving signals from and transmitting analog signals to a telephone network; and
10 a third interface configured to connect to a computer for receiving and transmitting digital signals to a data network.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the first and second interfaces comprise RJ22 jacks, and wherein the third interface comprises a port for a serial connection to the computer.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein at least one of said interfaces comprises a wireless interface.

18. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

20 circuitry for transforming the analog signals into the digital signals and vice-versa.

19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the circuitry includes an analog-to-digital converter (ADC) for converting waveforms from analog to digital, a digital-to-analog converter (DAC) for converting waveforms from digital to analog, and a
25 digital signal processor (DSP) to process the digital waveforms.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the DSP includes a voice-over-IP encoder-decoder (VoIP codec).

21. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

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modulator-demodulator (modem) circuitry configured to demodulate data from
an analog signal and to modulate an analog signal to carry data.

22. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the modem circuitry comprises a dual tone
multiple frequency (DTMF) modulator and demodulator.

23. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:
a first user input mechanism to start a meeting over a data network; and
a second user input mechanism to join a meeting over the data network

24. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising
a third user input mechanism to record audio of the meeting.

25. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:
memory for storing audio of the meeting.

26. A customer premises equipment (CPE) device, the device comprising:
a first interface configured to receive and transmit analog signals to a
telephone network;
a second interface configured to receive and transmit digital signals to a data
network;
a first user input mechanism to start a meeting over a data network; and
a second user input mechanism to join a meeting over the data network.

27. The CPE device of claim 26, further comprising:
signal processing circuitry configured to transform the analog signals into the
digital signals and vice-versa.

28. The CPE device of claim 27, further comprising:
a third user input mechanism to record audio of the meeting.

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29. An adaptor product configured to bridge a telephone network and a data network, the adaptor product comprising:
means for transmitting a start meeting message over the data network to a data center;
5 means for receiving a meeting identification from the data center into the adaptor product; and
means for transmitting the meeting identification from the adaptor product over the telephone network to a second adaptor product.
- 10 30. An adaptor device comprising:
a first interface configured to connect to a telephone base for receiving and transmitting signals to the telephone base;
a second interface configured to connect to a telephone network for receiving signals from and transmitting signals to the telephone network; and
15 a third interface configured to connect to a computer for receiving and transmitting digital signals to a data network.
31. An adaptor device comprising:
a phone interface configured to receive and transmit audio signals from and to
20 a user;
a telecommunications interface configured to communicate signals with a telephone network; and
a computer interface configured to connect to a computer for receiving and transmitting digital signals to a data network,
25 wherein the adaptor device is configured to provide for the user to have phone calls by way of both the telephone network and the data network.
32. The device of claim 31, further comprising a mechanism to select either the telephone network or the data network for making a phone call.

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33. The device of claim 31, whereby automatic phone answering functionality is provided using a phone answering application on the computer.

5 34. The device of claim 31, whereby speed dialing functionality is provided using an application on the computer.

35. An adaptor device comprising:
a phone interface configured to receive and transmit audio signals from and to
a user by way of a phone; and
10 a computer interface configured to connect to a computer for receiving and
transmitting digital signals to a data network,
wherein the adaptor device is configured to provide for the user to use the
phone as an audio input to the computer.